

What is claimed is:

1. A method of maintaining a data communications protocol session, the method comprising the steps of:

sending a request from a client to a server over a data communications network;

5 receiving said request in said server;

sending a response to said request from said server to said client over said data

communications network;

receiving said response in an agent;

determining if illusory content needs to be sent prior to sending said response;

10 performing processing in said agent as a result of said response;

if illusory content needs to be sent during said processing, sending one or more messages containing illusory content from said agent to said client;

sending said response from said agent to said client; and

receiving said response in said client.

15 2. A method for an agent to maintain a data communications protocol session, the method comprising:

receiving a response in an agent from a server in a communications network, in response to a request from a client;

20 determining if illusory content needs to be sent prior to sending said response;

performing processing in said agent as a result of said response;

if illusory content needs to be sent during said processing, sending one or more messages containing illusory content from said agent to said client; and

sending said response from said agent to said client.

3. A method as in claim 2, wherein said step of receiving a response further comprises receiving a file.

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4. A method as in claim 3, wherein said file further comprises a computer program.

5. A method as in claim 3, wherein said file further comprises a document.

10 6. A method as in claim 2, wherein said step of performing processing further comprises searching a file.

7. A method as in claim 6, wherein said step of searching a file further comprises scanning said file for one or more computer viruses.

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8. A method as in claim 6, wherein said step of searching a file further comprises scanning said file for one or more text phrases.

20 9. A method as in claim 2, wherein said step of performing processing further comprises encrypting a file.

10. A method as in claim 2, wherein said step of performing processing further comprises decrypting a file.

11. A method as in claim 2, wherein said step of performing processing further comprises creating a public key digital signature.

5 12. A method as in claim 2, wherein said step of performing processing further comprises verifying a public key digital signature.

Sub 13. A method as in claim 2, wherein said data communications protocol session further comprises an HTML session.

14. A method as in claim 13, wherein said step of sending one or more messages containing illusory content further comprises the steps of:

creating a copy of said response;

modifying said copy of said response by inserting an entity-header; and

transmitting said modified response said client.

15. A computer readable medium containing computer program instructions for maintaining a data communications protocol session, said computer program instructions containing instructions for:

20 receiving a response from a server in a communications network, in response to a request from a client;

determining if illusory content needs to be sent prior to sending said response;

performing processing as a result of said response;

